

# foodservice **monthly**™

The Newsmagazine Foodservice Professionals Rely On



## Today's Healthcare Foodservice

INOVA Fairfax Embraces  
Healthy Commitment  
with Morrison/Thompson  
Hospitality: The Great  
Living Menu

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## INOVA Fairfax: Healthcare Meets the ‘Great Living Menu’

BY MICHAEL BIRCHENALL

The inspiration for this story came during my eight-day stay at INOVA Fairfax in October 2013 for my lung transplant. I had only stayed in a hospital once before and that was in October 2012 for four days for a lung biopsy. My experience with the dreaded “hospital” food was quite limited ... only knowing it by its less than stellar reputation and reading the social media posts of food folks complaining about the food and begging friends to bring them something they could eat.

My actual experience was quite different. For one thing, at this point I was fully appreciating the Warren Zevon story that Greg Casten and John Rorapaugh of ProFish shared with me at a Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington event. Zevon, the songwriter, had been diagnosed at 56 with terminal cancer and made an appearance on the David Letterman Show to

share the news. Letterman asked him what he had learned from the experience and Zevon answered, “How much you’re supposed to enjoy every sandwich.” I was in the enjoying every sandwich stage and remain so.

All my meals were served at the appropriate temperatures (hot foods, hot; cold foods cold), were scratch-made with fresh ingredients and served for most of my meals with care and pleasant hospitality by catering associate Larry Jayjohn, a professional who works hard to please a floor of seriously ill and recovering patients. He makes it happen. But it was the dessert on Halloween night that fueled this story. I received a red velvet cupcake with a hand-decorated plate ... with a chocolate piping. I sent it out on my Instagram; I was impressed that someone had taken the time and effort to do something special. I noticed.

And then before I was discharged, I received a visit in my room from

Jack Filipovich. He wanted to know my impression of the food I had been served and the quality of the service. Once again, this didn’t fit inside the small box of hospital foodservice expectation. I was blown away again.

For 2014, I added Healthcare to the editorial calendar and here we are today. I am a one-year recipient of this gift of life and I wanted to meet the team that served over 2 million meals at INOVA Fairfax (661,597 of them to patients).

INOVA Fairfax uses a contract feeder, as do most hospitals. Food and Nutrition is contracted to a collaborative effort of Thompson Hospitality (locally owned) and Morrison Healthcare ... both through the Compass Group. I met with David Iannamico, Director of Food & Nutrition; Sheila Magnano, Director of Patient Service; Denis Manneville, Assistant Executive Chef; Jack Filipovich, Director of Production and the person who



Red Velvet cupcake

coordinated my visit Meaghan McDonnell, Joint Venture Director for Thompson Hospitality.

They shared with me what differentiates the Great Living Menu.

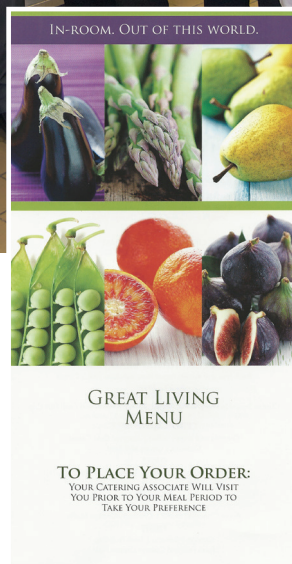
The mission is to help patients understand that they can eat flavorfully while also eating healthy. Here are some ways that they achieve their mission:

- The regular diet, cardiac diet and consistent carbohydrate (diabetic) diet all receive the same great tasting meal selection so that no diet selections are “punished” by denying or restricting certain food items.
- Provide restaurant quality meals that are made with scratch ingredients and whole foods.
- Homemade soups are available at every lunch and dinner. A variety of whole grains are incorporated throughout the menu:





Larry Jayohn, Catering Associate; Meaghan McDonnell, Joint Venture Director; Jack Filipovich, Director of Production; Denis Manneville, Assistant Executive Chef; David Iannamico, Director of Food and Nutrition; Marites Talastas, Patient Service Manager for Morrison/Thompson Hospitality at INOVA Fairfax Hospital



- Whole wheat tortillas, sandwich thins, breads and crackers
- Whole grain pasta, brown rice and grain blends with red rice, barley and rye
- Multi-grain pancakes, steel-cut oats, flaxseed and wheat germ
- “Stealth health” is incorporated into every meal

Examples of stealth health initiatives:

- Olive oil replaces butter in potato and side dishes.
- Meatloaf is made from a blend of natural lean ground beef and turkey.
- Sauces are created with low sodium stocks and fresh herbs.
- Smaller portions of regular (or non-diet) desserts are served.
- Adding legumes to baked goods to increase fiber and flavor.
- Using flaxseed and wheat germ to increase whole grains in pancakes, oatmeal and our granola parfaits.
- Leafy greens such as spinach and basil in soups and pesto.

Regular tastings are held as new items are reviewed to be incorporated into the patient or retail menus. Recently McDonnell who is also a chef had made a vegan presentation to the staff and hospital committee that reviews the menus.

They are also committed to the use of **Minimal Antibiotics, Sustainable Seafood and In Season Local Produce**. For local produce they use the local aggregator Blue Ridge Produce as well as Hearn Kirkwood. Their broadliner is US Foods ... who must according to their contract supply them with only sustainable foods.

INOVA Fairfax meals delivered what they promised, exceeded my expectation and continues to work to advance their standards and commitment to healthy eating. That works for me ... and it should be the goal of all foodservice, restaurants included.



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